



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
COORDINATING COUNCIL**

**2018 ANNUAL REPORT**

**MISSION:**

*To reduce the incidence of domestic violence and create a safe  
community for families to live free of abuse.*

**September 15, 2018**

## Table of Contents

DVCC MEMBERSHIP .....	3
COUNCIL INFORMATION .....	4
TERM OF SERVICE.....	4
SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS.....	4
LEADERSHIP .....	4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	5
VICTIM SERVICES COMMITTEE .....	8
EDUCATION AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE.....	11
LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY PLANNING COMMITTEE .....	17
OFFENDER PROGRAM AND POLICY COMMITTEE.....	19
SUMMARY .....	22

## DVCC MEMBERSHIP EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

**TERESA BENNETT**  
SENIOR ADMINISTRATOR, CRISIS SERVICES  
FOR **UMA AHLUWALIA**, DIRECTOR  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES

**NICOLE Y. DREW**  
COMMISSIONER  
FOR **JODI FINKELSTEIN**, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

**DEBBIE FEINSTEIN**  
VICE CHAIR, DVCC  
ASSISTANT STATE'S ATTORNEY  
FOR **JOHN MCCARTHY**  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

**MARCUS JONES**  
ASSISTANT CHIEF  
FOR **J. THOMAS MANGER**, CHIEF  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

THE HONORABLE **SIDNEY KATZ**  
CHAIR, DVCC  
COUNCILMEMBER  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL

**THOMAS MANION**  
DIRECTOR, FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER  
FOR SHERIFF **DARREN POPKIN**  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

**TINA MICHAELS**  
PROGRAM MANAGER, PRE-TRIAL SUPERVISION  
FOR **ROBERT GREEN**, DIRECTOR  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF  
CORRECTION AND REHABILITATION

THE HONORABLE **JOHN MOFFETT**  
ASSOCIATE JUDGE  
FOR THE HONORABLE **PATRICIA MITCHELL**  
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE  
DISTRICT COURT OF MARYLAND FOR  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

THE HONORABLE **KARLA SMITH**  
ASSOCIATE JUDGE  
FOR THE HONORABLE **ROBERT A. GREENBERG**  
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT

THE HONORABLE **REBECCA SMONDROWSKI**  
BOARD MEMBER  
FOR THE HONORABLE **MICHAEL A. DURSO**  
PRESIDENT, BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**ROCHELLE PERRY**  
FIELD SUPERVISOR  
DIVISION OF PAROLE AND PROBATION  
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

## PUBLIC MEMBERS

**SHEILA KAMDAR**  
COMMUNITY MEMBER

**RESA LEVY**  
COMMUNITY MEMBER

**ESHIGO OKASILI, ESQ.**  
COMMUNITY MEMBER

**CHERYL KRAVITZ**  
COMMUNITY MEMBER

**NAOMI PEARSON**  
STUDENT MEMBER

**RONALD WHALEN**  
COMMUNITY MEMBER

## STAFF

**SMITA VARIA**  
PROGRAM MANAGER  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

## **COUNCIL INFORMATION**

### **TERM OF SERVICE**

There are seventeen voting members of the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (DVCC) who serve without compensation and are appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council. Five are Ex-Officio members who serve at the request of the County Council: the Administrative Judge of the Circuit Court; the Administrative Judge of the District Court; the Sheriff; the State's Attorney; and the Regional Administrator for the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services. There are six Ex-Officio members who are appointed by the County Executive: a member of the County Council selected by the Council President; the Directors of the Montgomery County Departments of Correction and Rehabilitation; Health and Human Services; and Police; the Executive Director of the Montgomery County Commission for Women; and the President of the Board of Education for Montgomery County Public Schools. In addition, there are five members of the general public appointed by the County Executive for renewable three-year terms, one of whom is an attorney representing domestic violence victims, and four who have a demonstrated interest in domestic violence issues, including at least one who is a survivor of domestic violence. In 2010, the DVCC's code pertaining to membership was amended to add a student member. The student member is a high school junior or senior who is appointed to serve a one-year term that can be renewed for one additional year.

### **SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

The DVCC meets bi-monthly on the second Thursday of the month and has met seventy-one times since September 2006. Meetings are open to the public.

### **LEADERSHIP**

In January 2018, the DVCC re-elected Councilmember Sidney Katz as Chair; and re-elected Debbie Feinstein, Assistant State's Attorney, as Vice Chair.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the twelfth year since its creation, the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (DVCC) has advanced its mission of reducing the incidence of domestic violence and creating a safe community where families are free of abuse. In 2017-2018, the four committees, Victim Services, Education and Outreach, Legislative and Policy Planning and Offender Program and Policy, have each identified focus areas and made progress on executing recommendations from the previous report. This report summarizes the accomplishments of the past year and makes recommendations for the next year.

Special thanks go to the Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation for its continued, unwavering support of Domestic Violence Coordinating Council initiatives and the Montgomery County Family Justice Center.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Family Justice Center (FJC) welcomed the Pro Bono Counseling Project (PBCP) as an off-site partner. Having PBCP as a partner will increase the FJC's network of free counseling services offered to clients of the FJC;
- The FJC made professional development trainings available to onsite staff to increase their knowledge of best practices in the domestic violence field;
- The Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team met on a monthly basis to review domestic violence-related fatalities and near-fatalities and develop findings and recommendations to prevent similar incidents in the future;
- The Montgomery County Assessment Lethality Emergency Response Team (ALERT) met every one to two months to discuss real time updates on active high risk domestic violence cases;
- The Education and Outreach Committee collaborated with multiple Montgomery County agencies and community organizations for the 9th Annual Choose Respect Montgomery Healthy Teen Dating Conference, which was held on April 15, 2018;
- The Education and Outreach Committee coordinated the 9th Annual Choose Respect Montgomery Public Service Announcement (PSA) Video Contest, which had a record number of entries;
- The Education and Outreach Committee presented the Choose Respect Montgomery Healthy Teen Dating Curriculum, "Expect Respect," to over 4,500 youth in Montgomery County Public Schools as well as various youth groups in the community;
- The Education and Outreach Committee continued the expansion of Coaching Boys Into Men (CBIM) with programs at Springbrook High School, Richard Montgomery High School, Montgomery Blair High School, Northwest High School, Colonel Zadok

Magruder High School, Parkland Magnet Middle School for Aerospace Technology and the Charles E Smith Jewish Day School;

- The Education and Outreach Committee distributed 10,000 Family Justice Center multi-language resource cards around Montgomery County to raise awareness of the services offered to domestic violence victims and their families at the FJC;
- The Education and Outreach Committee collaborated with the Montgomery County Commission for Women, Public Information Office, and other agencies to coordinate a domestic violence outreach campaign which featured information about the Family Justice Center in English and Spanish on Ride On buses and at Bus Shelters throughout the county;
- The Legislative and Policy Planning Committee carefully monitored domestic violence-related legislation that was proposed during the 2018 legislative session in the Maryland General Assembly;
- The Domestic Violence Coordinating Council participated in the opening of the Safe Passage Center for Supervised Visitation and Monitored Exchange (SPC);
- The Offender Program and Policy Committee met with Circuit Court and District Court Judges to promote the Abuser Intervention Program; and
- The Offender Program and Policy Committee created a subcommittee to establish procedures to implement a new bill that makes violating a condition of pre or post-trial release a separate crime.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2018 - 2019**

- The Victim Services Committee recommends ongoing collaboration among FJC agency partners and the FJC Foundation to continue identifying gaps in domestic violence victim services, and then exploring appropriate, sustainable solutions to fill those gaps;
- The Victim Services Committee recommends continuing to offer trainings that share best practices so that the Family Justice Center staff is at the forefront of offering high level services to victims of domestic violence;
- The Victim Services Committee recommends continued collaboration with FJC agency partners in reviewing previous domestic violence fatalities and active high-risk cases to ensure the utmost safety for domestic violence victims in Montgomery County;
- The Choose Respect Montgomery initiative has been a successful prevention and outreach project over the past nine years. It is the recommendation of the Education and Outreach Committee to continue collaboration with county agencies, community organizations, and schools to increase awareness and prevention of teen dating violence through the annual conference, presentations at area schools and programs with both male and female athletes;

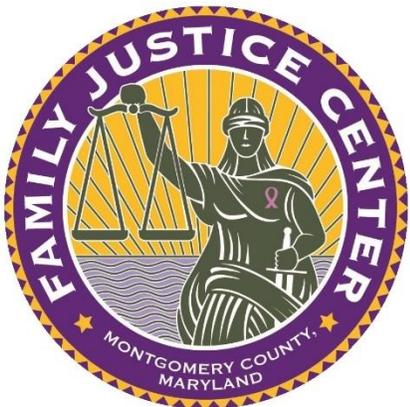
- The Education and Outreach Committee recommends continued promotion of the Family Justice Center and its services through continued maintenance of the FJC Multi-Language Information Card initiative;
- The Education and Outreach Committee recommends continuing to develop and implement domestic violence public outreach campaigns with the assistance of the Montgomery County Public Information Office and other County agencies and organizations;
- The Legislative and Policy Planning Committee recommends ongoing collaboration with the Office of Intergovernmental Relations and the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence to monitor and promote legislation that supports the mission of the DVCC;
- The Offender Program and Policy Committee recommends ongoing collaboration with the Department of Health and Human services and other related agencies to promote the Safe Passage Center and to ensure the center's success to include expanding use of the center for cases that may have criminal stay away orders but where supervision/exchange at the center has not been ordered by court;
- The Offender Program and Policy Committee recommends ongoing collaboration between the Abuser Intervention Program (AIP), the Courts, Pre-Trial Services and the Family Justice Center to address any concerns regarding the AIP program;
- The Offender Program and Policy Committee recommends continued collaboration with the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, the Montgomery County Police Department, Pre-Trial Services and the State's Attorney's Office to enforce the Violation of Conditions of Pre and Post-Trial Release law successfully.

## VICTIM SERVICES COMMITTEE

**CHAIR: THOMAS MANION**

The Victim Services Committee has been collaborating actively with Montgomery County Family Justice Center (FJC) agency partners, the Montgomery County FJC Foundation and community volunteers for ongoing sustainability and effective operation of the FJC. The Committee is focused on establishing and funding FJC programs that not only promote safety for victims of domestic violence, but also assist these victims in locating a path to sustainability. The Committee is also focused on developing and maintaining collaborative partnerships to ensure survivors in the community are receiving the best possible services at such a critical time. Primary objectives successfully achieved in the previous year are outlined below, as well as recommendations for the coming year.

### MONTGOMERY COUNTY FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER



Since opening its doors in April 2009, nearly eleven thousand victims representing over one hundred different countries of origin have sought services at the Montgomery County FJC with the goal of ending domestic violence in their lives. During Fiscal Year 2018, the FJC served 1,547 victims of intimate partner violence. The clients ranged in age from 14 to 80, with the average age being 35. The FJC provided the services in 15 different languages (English, Spanish, French, Amharic, Vietnamese, Mandarin Chinese, Farsi, Russian, Urdu, Portuguese, Armenian, French Creole, Burmese, Tigrinya, and American Sign Language). FJCs are recognized

nationally by the law enforcement, medical and mental health communities as a best-practice for responding to domestic violence and providing services to victims and their families. Domestic violence victims who come to the FJC are able to receive a broad array of critical Montgomery County services, which are provided in a safe, welcoming environment that also offers on-site child care to support clients while they access FJC services. FJC staff help with basic needs such as shelter, food, housing, and transportation, all of which are often lost to victims forced to flee their homes. One of the many services offered is assistance in filing for a protective order from the safety of the FJC via video conference link with the Courts. During Fiscal Year 2018, 150 Temporary Protective Order hearings were held via video conference between the FJC and the District and Circuit Courts of Montgomery County, 95% of which were granted. This program was made possible by a generous donation from Verizon through its partnership with the Family Justice Center Foundation.

The FJC holds monthly meetings with all on-site partners to share announcements, updates and changes in policy at the FJC. The on-site partners also discuss any changes in their

services or concerns they have. These monthly meetings allow for open communication so that all partners can collaborate efficiently and effectively to serve clients.

## **EXPANSIONS IN CLIENT SERVICES**

At the beginning of the fiscal year, the Montgomery County FJC on-site partners included the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office, Montgomery County Police Department, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, DVS Legal Services, House of Ruth - Maryland, Catholic Charities, the Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse (JCADA), the Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project (DVRP) and Career Catchers. These partners provide a vast array of services to FJC clients and their families, including comprehensive safety planning, service of protective orders, welfare checks, criminal investigation and prosecution of offenders, therapy for both adults and children, legal representation at protective order hearings, immigration legal services, and career counseling. Off-site partners include the Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation, the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Chesapeake Counseling Associates, the Muslim Community Center, Montgomery College, the Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation, Court Watch Montgomery, and Women Who Care Ministries. This year, the FJC welcomed the Pro Bono Counseling Project (PBCP) as an off-site partner. The PBCP ensures that Maryland families and individuals with limited resources in need of mental health care are linked with licensed mental health professionals who provide care on a volunteer basis at no cost. Having the PBCP as a partner ensures that FJC clients receive counseling in a timely manner. Nearly all on-site FJC partners have staff that are bi-lingual in English and Spanish and have access to a language line to provide services in the language most comfortable for the victim.



**RECOMMENDATION:** The Victim Services Committee recommends ongoing collaboration among FJC agency partners and the FJC Foundation to continue identifying gaps in domestic violence victim services, and then exploring appropriate, sustainable solutions to fill those gaps.

## **ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

This year, the Family Justice Center has offered professional training to the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office staff, along with staff from other on-site partners on topics pertaining to domestic violence. These trainings have allowed staff in direct contact with victims of domestic violence to stay up to date on new research, information and services available to survivors. Staff have participated in trainings on technology abuse, stalking, and elder abuse. These trainings were conducted by national, statewide and local organizations.

The Family Justice Center Director, Program Manager and one Client Assistant attended the 8th Annual International Family Justice Center Conference in Fort Worth, Texas. They were able to tour the new FJC in Fort Worth and networked with others from around the world who also work in a multi-disciplinary or multi-agency setting. Attending the conference allowed them to learn about new best practices, promising interventions, and other strategies for maximizing the potential of the Montgomery County FJC.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Victim Services Committee recommends continuing to offer trainings that share best practices so that the Family Justice Center staff is at the forefront of offering high level services to victims of domestic violence.

### **CASE REVIEW TEAMS**

The Montgomery County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team (DVFRT) held monthly meetings throughout the fiscal year. The Chair of DVFRT is Debbie Feinstein, Assistant State's Attorney, and the Vice Chair is Tom Manion, Director of the Family Justice Center. The agencies represented on DVFRT are the Montgomery County Office of the State's Attorney, Montgomery County Office of the Sheriff, Montgomery County Police Department, Shady Grove Medical Center, House of Ruth Maryland, Office of the County Attorney, Montgomery County Child Welfare Services, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Maryland Division of Parole and Probation, Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse, Takoma Park Police Department, DVS Legal Services, Montgomery County Abused Persons Program, Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission, Montgomery County Public Schools, Judiciary of Maryland, and Muslim Community Center. This team reviews domestic violence-related fatalities and near-fatalities and develops findings and recommendations to prevent similar incidents in the future. In 2017, the Team reviewed four domestic violence cases, which included three domestic violence related homicides and one attempted homicide.

The Montgomery County Assessment Lethality Emergency Response Team (ALERT) collaborated electronically in real time on domestic violence cases identified as having an elevated risk of lethality. The team also met in-person every one or two months to provide additional case updates. During one ALERT meeting, due to the collaboration of the ALERT team partners, two offenders were located and arrested on outstanding warrants before the meeting concluded. A total of 53 cases were identified for ALERT during the year.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Victim Services Committee recommends continued collaboration with FJC agency partners in reviewing previous domestic violence fatalities and active high-risk cases to ensure the utmost safety for domestic violence victims in Montgomery County.

## **EDUCATION AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE**

### **CHAIR: DEBBIE FEINSTEIN**

The Education and Outreach Committee continued to focus domestic violence prevention this year. Our teen dating violence prevention initiative, titled Choose Respect Montgomery, includes four primary programs: an annual conference for teens, their parents, educators, and youth service providers; a public service announcement video contest for teens; healthy teen dating curriculum, “Expect Respect,” which is presented in the County’s middle and high schools; and Coaching Boys Into Men, a program which utilizes the unique role of coaches in the lives of young male athletes to teach them to be respectful both on and off the field. This year, the Education and Outreach Committee worked with the Montgomery County Public Information Office to create new branding for Choose Respect which visually captures the mission of the initiative. The Committee also promoted Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month in February 2018; hosted a visual campaign on Ride On Buses to promote domestic violence services for Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October; and distributed 10,000 multi-language resource cards to the community. Highlights from each of these activities, as well as recommendations for the future, are listed below.

### **CHOOSE RESPECT MONTGOMERY:** **HEALTHY TEEN DATING CONFERENCE**

The 9th Annual Choose Respect Montgomery Healthy Teen Dating Conference was held on Sunday, April 15, 2018 at Richard Montgomery High School. Funded by Verizon Wireless through its partnership with the Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation and sponsored by the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (DVCC), Montgomery County Public Schools, and numerous other Montgomery County agencies and organizations, the purpose of this annual conference is to promote respect in dating relationships and to raise community awareness about the prevalence of teen dating violence. The conference, which was promoted using the hashtag #RespectYourSelfie2018, focused on how to identify the red flags of dating abuse, who to talk to and how to help a friend.



New look for Choose Respect Montgomery

This year, nearly 500 students, parents, public officials, educators, youth service providers, and volunteers attended the conference. Attendees came from more than 50 different schools and all areas of the county. As soon as attendees arrived, they walked the Red Carpet and took selfies with their friends and public officials. Students were encouraged to post their selfies on social media using #RespectYourSelfie2018. Through the Committee’s

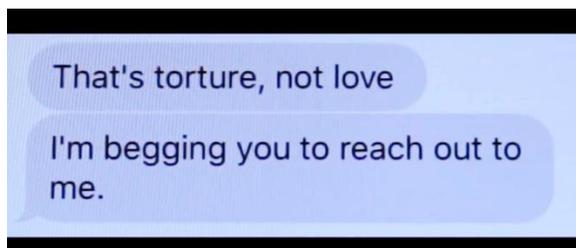
continued partnership with Zoomph, a live social media feed with rotating tiles played on a large screen in the main auditorium, showcasing all posts and pictures that used the conference hashtag. While students walked through the resource fair with over 40 organizations represented, they also listened to live music by School of Rock, Silver Spring.

The conference, emceed by Toby Knapp (97.1 FM) also included a powerful survivor story by a young woman who attends college in Washington DC. Then, the winners of the Public Service Announcement Video Contest were announced, with “Text Me Back, K?” submitted by a group from Wootton High School taking first place. Throughout the opening session, raffle prizes were announced. Students then participated in small group workshops developed by the Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse (JCADA) and TurnAround, Inc. JCADA’s workshop, entitled It’s Not Love®, began with a “choose your own path” activity. TurnAround, Inc.’s workshop addressed bystander intervention and gave participants skills on how to safely intervene if they witness abuse or violence. Youth service providers and educators participated in similar workshops, while parents all participated in one workshop session led by Cheryl Kravitz, a member of the DVCC and a domestic violence survivor. Small group workshops were also offered in Spanish for students and parents. Following the workshops, attendees came back to the lobby and enjoyed free pizza.

The conference evaluations were very positive and will be taken into consideration when planning future events.

The DVCC is very appreciative of the event sponsorship from Verizon Wireless through its partnership with the Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation. Special thanks also go to Montgomery County Public Schools, JCADA, iHeart Radio, Zoomph and the numerous other county and community partners that made the 9th Annual Choose Respect Conference a huge success. Plans for the 10th annual conference scheduled for Sunday, April 7, 2019 at Richard Montgomery High School are already underway.

### **CHOOSE RESPECT MONTGOMERY:** **PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT VIDEO CONTEST**



**FAN FAVORITE: “I’M FINE”**  
**(RICHARD MONTGOMERY HIGH SCHOOL)**

For the ninth consecutive year, the DVCC coordinated a Public Service Announcement Video Contest for local teens in middle and high school. This contest raises teens’ awareness on the issue of teen dating violence, both through the creation of the PSAs, as well as the distribution of the finished PSAs on social media, YouTube, and in schools.

Participants were challenged to submit a 60-second video promoting attention to forms of dating abuse other than physical violence,

including technological, emotional and financial abuse. Students were also asked to include the phone number for the Family Justice Center. Participants submitted a record 138 entries (by 316 students) from 21 different schools and 2 organizations. Along with the winners chosen by a panel of judges (\$1000 for first prize, \$750 for second, \$500 for third, and gift cards for honorable mention), student voted on a “fan favorite,” who won \$500. The “fan favorite” award was sponsored by the Montgomery County Police Department Foundation and the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Theta Omega Chapter, and was awarded to “I’m Fine,” submitted by a student from Richard Montgomery High School. This year’s contest was sponsored by Verizon Wireless through its partnership with the Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation. Winners were announced at the 9th Annual Choose Respect Healthy Teen Dating Conference.

The DVCC and its partners believe this contest provides a worthwhile opportunity for teens and will launch the 2019 contest in October 2018. Entries will be accepted in English and Spanish, and cash prizes will be awarded to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners, which will be announced at the 2019 Choose Respect Conference on Sunday, April 7, 2019 at Richard Montgomery High School.

### **CHOOSE RESPECT MONTGOMERY:** **EXPECT RESPECT - HEALTHY TEEN DATING CURRICULUM**

During the summer of 2017, the DVCC Manager revised the Choose Respect Montgomery Healthy Teen Dating Curriculum, Expect Respect, using evidence-based strategies. The revised presentation was approved by mental health clinicians from the Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse. The 45-minute Prezi presentation provides opportunities for student involvement and features brief videos on various dating abuse topics such as verbal abuse, abuse through technology and how to intervene as a responsible witness. The conversations with teens during the presentation specifically focus on:

- 1) Components of healthy dating behaviors such as trust, respect and non-threatening communication;
- 2) Identification of early warning signs of abusive dating behavior to include control, isolation, criticism and manipulation;
- 3) Identification of the roles in abusive dating relationships; and
- 4) Addressing dating violence when it is witnessed in school or social circles.



Local resources and national teen dating abuse help lines and websites are also discussed. The youth received a handout with the warning signs of dating violence, and a list of resources in the county.

The Choose Respect Montgomery Healthy Teen Dating Curriculum is offered at no cost and is available in English and Spanish. Presentation requests are received at the Sheriff's Office from various school personnel, such as health teachers, counselors and school principals; and from community organizations including youth groups and religious organizations. Representatives of the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office, the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, Chesapeake Counseling Associates and the Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse conduct the presentations.

In its eighth year since implementation, Expect Respect was presented to over 4,500 youth participants in 142 classes from 20 schools and community groups. The program was also included in a statewide publication, *Healthy Teen Dating: A Guide for Educators and Youth Service Providers*, presented by the Governor's Family Violence Council and the Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention.

### **CHOOSE RESPECT MONTGOMERY:** **COACHING BOYS INTO MEN**

Historically, intimate partner violence prevention has been viewed solely as a women's issue. Anti-violence organizations and programs were established as safe spaces where women exposed to intimate partner and sexual violence could find support and healing. In recent years, however, attention has been drawn to the importance of engaging men and boys in violence prevention as well. Many promising programs that involve young men are being introduced across the United States, including one created by Futures Without Violence's entitled Coaching Boys Into Men (CBIM). CBIM is a free toolkit that utilizes the unique and important role that coaches play in the lives of young men. These comprehensive tools assist coaches in planning important discussions with athletes about respect for women and girls, and that violence does not equal strength. Through CBIM, male athletes learn skills to avoid violence and abuse in their relationships.



Springbrook High School piloted the first CBIM program in Montgomery County, led by varsity football coach Adam Bahr during the 2013-2014 academic year. The program has now been implemented in seven schools—Springbrook High School, Richard Montgomery High School, Montgomery Blair High School, Northwest High School, Colonel Zadok

Magruder High School, Parkland Magnet Middle School for Aerospace Technology and the Charles E Smith Jewish Day School.

The Education and Outreach Committee has also started promoting Athletes as Leaders, a similar program for female-identified athletes. This program aims to empower female-identified youth to take an active role in promoting healthy relationships and ending sexual violence. Athletes are encouraged to be leaders in creating a culture of safety and respect at their school. Athletes as Leaders will be piloted at area schools in the Fall of 2018.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Choose Respect Montgomery initiative has been a successful prevention and outreach project over the past nine years. It is the recommendation of the Education and Outreach Committee to continue collaboration with county agencies, community organizations, and schools to increase awareness and prevention of teen dating violence through the annual conference, presentations at area schools and programs with both male and female athletes.

### **FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER MULTI-LANGUAGE INFORMATION CARDS**

Victims of domestic violence often do not know what services are available to them, or where to go to seek help. To promote awareness of these resources, the Education and Outreach Committee developed Family Justice Center (FJC) Multi-Language information cards. The language card states, “Are you afraid of your partner? Free help is available,” in the 16 most commonly spoken languages in Montgomery County—English, Spanish, French, Mandarin, Amharic, Korean, Swahili, Igbo, Arabic, Tagalog, Russian, Urdu, Hindi, Vietnamese, Farsi and Portuguese. The Committee wanted to ensure that the cards were accessible both to low literacy populations, and to more people who speak different languages.



This year, 10,000 cards have been placed in clear, wall-affixed receptacles and are on display in Montgomery County Regional Services Centers, Montgomery County Recreation Centers, Montgomery County public libraries, in both District Court locations in Montgomery County—Rockville and Silver Spring—in the courtrooms where protective order cases are normally heard, and in all of the women’s restrooms in the Judicial Center/Circuit Court building. Montgomery County Police also have them available in patrol cars. DVCC Council Members have also been distributing the cards to the public. Replenishment protocols are in place for all locations where the cards are available.

The Education and Outreach Committee is currently printing cards for distribution on all 375 Montgomery County Ride On buses and is gathering contact information in order to distribute cards to religious and spiritual groups, doctors' offices, dentist offices, veterinarian offices, and hair and nail salons.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Education and Outreach Committee recommends continued promotion of the Family Justice Center and its services through continued maintenance of the FJC Multi-Language Information Card initiative.

## **MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC OUTREACH CAMPAIGN**



During October 2017, for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the Education and Outreach Committee worked with the Montgomery County Public Information Office on a countywide domestic violence education and outreach campaign. The campaign included 28 exterior bus signs in English and Spanish and 15 bus shelter signs on Ride On buses. The funders for this project included Council Member Sidney Katz's Office, the Commission for Women, the Family Justice Center Foundation, and Court Watch Montgomery. The campaign also included banner ads at the top of County social media pages, County digital screens, and the County Rotator during October.

In February 2018, the Education and Outreach Committee worked with the Montgomery County Board of Education to present a proclamation designating February as Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month at the February Board of Education Meeting. The Education and Outreach Committee also tweeted messages about dating violence on Choose Respect's social media pages.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Education and Outreach Committee recommends continuing to develop and implement domestic violence public outreach campaigns with the assistance of the Montgomery County Public Information Office and other County agencies and organizations.



# LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY PLANNING COMMITTEE

**CHAIR: ASSISTANT CHIEF MARCUS JONES**

The Legislative and Policy Planning Committee focused this year on supporting certain domestic violence- related legislation in the state of Maryland. Below is a summary of supported legislation as well as the committee's recommendation for the coming year.

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEGISLATION UPDATES

Numerous domestic violence-related bills were passed during this year's legislative session, all of which will take effect on October 1, 2018. Pieces of legislation that were of particular interest to the DVCC Legislative and Policy Planning Committee include:

- HB 388/SB 170 - Criminal Procedure - Violation of Conditions of Release  
This bill makes violation of a pretrial no contact order a crime. If a person is arrested and released pretrial, very often the court sets special conditions of release for the defendant. A common special condition is to have no contact with the victim. Under current law, if the defendant violates a pretrial special condition, it is not a crime. The only remedy is for the state's attorney to file to revoke the release condition. By making violation of release conditions a separate crime, it enables law enforcement to arrest a defendant for violating his/her conditions of release, including to stay away from the victim.
- HB 1303/SB 491 – Family Law – Domestic Violence – Permanent Protective Orders  
Under the current law, in order to be eligible for a permanent protective order, the respondent must be convicted and sentenced to a term of imprisonment of at least 5 years, the crime must be one of a list of enumerated crimes, and the respondent must have served at least 12 months of the sentence. In addition, the current statute requires that the crime must be the act of abuse that lead to the issuance of the final protective order. This bill expands the current permanent protective order statute to include any crime, not just one of the enumerated crimes, and applies even if the crime was not the act of abuse that led to the issuance of the protective order.
- HB 255 and 633/SB 578 – Secretary of State – Address Confidentiality Programs – Shielding of Real Property Records  
In 2016, the General Assembly passed a bill creating a Task Force to study and make recommendations about how to protect the identity and address of a participant in the Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) when recording a deed transferring real property to an ACP participant. This bill amends the ACP statute and creates a system for recording deeds and protecting the confidentiality of an ACP participant's address.
- HB 30/328/SB 121 – Family Law – Domestic Violence – Definition of Abuse  
This bill was amended to expand the way abuse is defined in a protective order statute to

include revenge porn.

- HB 1646/SB 1036 – Criminal Procedure – Firearms – Transfer

This bill requires the State’s Attorney’s Office to notify a defendant if s/he is charged with a domestically related, disqualifying crime and that, if convicted, s/he would be prohibited from possessing a firearm. It also requires the court to inform the defendant that s/he is prohibited from possessing a firearm and requires the defendant to provide proof to the court that all defendant’s firearms have been appropriately transferred.

- HB 102 – Family Violence – Seizure of Lethal Weapons – Lethal Violence Protective Order (“Red Flag Bill”)

This bill creates a mechanism to allow a petitioner to file for a lethal violence protective order if s/he believes the respondent poses an immediate and present danger of causing personal injury or injury to others due to the accessibility of a firearm. If granted the lethal violence protective order would require the respondent to surrender his/her firearms.

- HB 301/SB 270 – Courts – Evidence of Sexually Assaultive Behavior – Admissibility (The Repeat Sexual Predator Prevention Act of 2018)

This bill provides that, in a prosecution for certain specified sexual offenses, evidence of other sexually assaultive behavior by the defendant occurring before or after the offense for which the defendant is on trial may be admissible.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Legislative and Policy Planning Committee recommends ongoing collaboration with the Office of Intergovernmental Relations and the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence to monitor and promote legislation that supports the mission of the DVCC.

# OFFENDER PROGRAM AND POLICY COMMITTEE

**CHAIR: TINA MICHAELS**

The Offender Program and Policy Committee includes members from Montgomery County and Maryland State agencies that focus on domestic violence offender intervention. Committee members remain focused on evaluating offender programs within their individual departments and identifying collaborative opportunities to improve communication and offender services as a whole. The details of the committee's departmental and system review as well as recommendations for improvement are outlined below.

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY SUPERVISED EXCHANGE AND VISITATION CENTER

In 2014, County Executive Isiah Leggett established a work group to address the lack of supervised visitation services in Montgomery County. This collaborative group included members representing the Montgomery County Circuit Court, the District Court of Maryland for Montgomery County, the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, and other county agencies. Upon further review, the costs of the center were higher than expected, and the work group was unable to move forward.

In the Spring of 2016, a new proposal to establish supervised visitation and monitored exchange services in Montgomery County was completed and submitted to the County Executive for review. Following meetings with the County Executive, County Council and other stakeholders, it was decided that funding for a Supervised Visitation and Exchange Center would be provided in the FY18 budget through a contract to be monitored by the Department of Health and Human Services.

The Safe Passage Center for Supervised Visitation and Monitored Exchange (SPC) opened in January 2018. With a court order, residents can use the SPC for visitation and exchange.

Supervised visitation allows parents in high conflict or high-risk situations to maintain their bond with their children and have access to their children in a safe and supervised environment. There is no contact with the other parent which allows for a less stressful visit for the parent and child(ren). Through monitored



exchange, SPC staff will supervise the transfer of a child from the residential to the visiting parent at the start of the parent/child contact, and back to the residential parent at the end of the contact. The supervision is usually limited to the exchanges, and the remainder of the parent/child visit is unsupervised.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Offender Program and Policy Committee recommends ongoing collaboration with the Department of Health and Human services and other related agencies to promote the Safe Passage Center and to ensure the center's success to include expanding use of the center for cases that may have criminal stay away orders but where supervision/exchange at the center has not been ordered by court.

### **ABUSER INTERVENTION PROGRAM**

The Offender Program and Policy Committee met with the District Court Judges, the Circuit Court Judges and the Court Commissioners to discuss the Abuser Intervention Program (AIP). AIP is a program with two phases. The first phase is 6 weeks and the second phase is 16 weeks. Judges and Commissioners order offenders to complete phase one during Pre-Trial supervision. During the meetings with the Judges and Commissioners, the Offender Program and Policy Committee discussed the positive impact that AIP has on the attendees and asked the Judges to order the full 22-week AIP program while on Pre-Trial supervision. If they are sentenced to probation, they would also continue without a gap.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Offender Program and Policy Committee recommends ongoing collaboration between the Abuser Intervention Program (AIP), the Courts, Pre-Trial Services and the Family Justice Center to address any concerns regarding the AIP program.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF HB 388/SB 170 - CRIMINAL PROCEDURE - VIOLATION OF CONDITIONS OF RELEASE**

HB 388/SB 170 – Criminal Procedure – Violation of Conditions of Release is a new law that will go into effect on October 1, 2018. This bill makes violation of a pretrial no contact order a crime. If a person is arrested and released pretrial, very often the court sets special conditions of release for the defendant. A common special condition is to have no contact with the victim. Under current law, if the defendant violates a pretrial special condition, it is not a crime. The only remedy is for the state's attorney to file to revoke the release condition. By making violation of release conditions a separate crime, it enables law enforcement to arrest a defendant for violating his/her conditions of release, including to stay away from the victim.

The Offender Program and Policy Committee has been holding meetings with the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, the Montgomery County Police Department, Pre-Trial Services and the State's Attorney's Office to set up the policies and procedures to enforce

the new law. The agencies are working together to make sure that if someone is in violation of a pretrial no contact order, they are taken into custody without incident.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Offender Program and Policy Committee recommends continued collaboration with the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, the Montgomery County Police Department, Pre-Trial Services and the State's Attorney's Office to enforce the Violation of Conditions of Pre and Post-Trial Release law successfully.

## SUMMARY

Through the services provided by the FJC, the monitoring of domestic violence policy, and the implementation of numerous domestic violence prevention initiatives, the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (DVCC) continues to play an active and critical role in creating a safe community for families to live free of abuse. These activities and programs would not be possible without the support of DVCC agency partners, community groups and the Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation. In the coming year, the DVCC will continue to promote and expand existing initiatives and services as well as explore new, innovative strategies to reduce the incidence of domestic violence in Montgomery County.



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY GOVERNMENT**  
**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COORDINATING COUNCIL**  
**2018 ANNUAL REPORT**